

AN ORPHANAGE IN FAR CATHAY



“THANK YOU FOR TAKING CARE
OF ME.”

St. Mary's Orphanage Shanghai

ITS HISTORY

TWENTY-FOUR years ago, when Miss Wong, now Mrs. Pott, was in charge of St. Mary's Hall, Shanghai, a little neglected baby was brought to her and to save its life it was taken into the school and cared for. That was the beginning of St. Mary's Orphanage. At first the babies were kept in the Hall, but later on a house was built for them in the school compound; then, as both institutions grew in number, it became necessary to keep them more separate from each other, and through the kindness of friends a new building was put up, on a piece of land behind the school, but quite apart from it.

Miss Wong had charge of the Orphanage from 1884, even after her marriage, till Miss Mosher came, when it was handed over to her. After Miss Mosher left Shanghai, Miss Dodson took charge of the Orphanage as well as of the school, and this arrangement lasted till October 1903, when the new building was finished. Miss R. M. Elwin has since been in charge.

THE ORPHANAGE BUILDING

The present Orphanage was planned and built for this special purpose, and consists of a two-storied frame building opening on a courtyard, with verandas running round it. As the fresh air is good for the girls they spend all their spare hours, whenever possible, on these verandas or in their playground. Here merry and happy groups may often be seen, the elder girls sitting at their sewing, and the younger ones skipping, playing



MISS ELWIN AND THE NURSERY BABIES

games and riding up and down upon their see-saw, while the babies old enough to toddle spend many happy hours in their sandheap.

THE NURSERY

When the babies first arrive they go into the nursery, consisting of two bright and sunny rooms, one used as a day- and the other as a night-nursery, where they join a happy family of about ten or twelve other mites. These inmates of the nursery vary in age from two days to six and seven years; when they reach eight years old they go into the school-room.

Here their lessons are at first very simple, but as the scholars grow older they learn geography and arithmetic, and, of course, the Scriptures, and how to read and write their own language. The girls are all fond of singing, and even the tiny tots sing to themselves during their play, and keep good time and tune.

THEIR INDUSTRIAL WORK

When about eight years old, the girls begin to learn to sew, and as they grow older, to knit, crochet, do drawn-thread work, embroider and cross-stitch, and to make teneriffe lace; they also make and mend their own clothes and those of the younger ones. The morning hours are given up to study and the afternoon to needlework. Nearly all the housework is done by the girls, and two at a time help with the cooking.

The Board makes no appropriation, except the salary of the missionary in charge, to St. Mary's Orphanage, which is therefore dependent for its support upon the voluntary gifts of its friends. The yearly cost of its maintenance is about \$1,800, and in former years thirty

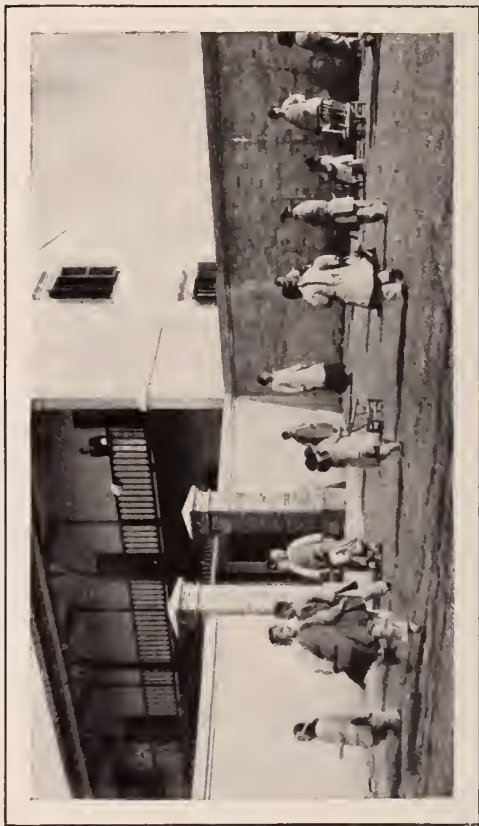
dollars was about sufficient for the year's support of a child. Many individuals and societies have been pleased to make these annual gifts ever since the Orphanage was established, and we are grateful for them, and hope for their continuance. At the same time, the rate of exchange is now so high that thirty dollars is hardly enough, and wherever the yearly gift can be increased to forty dollars, that will more nearly cover the yearly cost.

MISS ELWIN'S REPORT FOR 1907-1908

We have received fifteen children during the year, seven girls and four small boys, as boarders, for a temporary home or for schooling; and three girls and one baby boy who were not wanted by their own people.

The general health has been wonderfully good, considering the number of children in the home, the variety of ages and how sick some of the children were when they came. There have been but two deaths during the year, and no serious illness.

Often we are asked to take in bigger girls, and we do so when we find there is really no one to care for them. One little girl who was brought here about eight years old, had been sold by her mother, when she was not much more than a baby, to some people in Hangchow. They were unkind to her, and the poor little thing was almost starved. Fortunately for little Phoenix, a good Chinese woman belonging to the Presbyterian Church, whose husband was employed in the Post Office in Hangchow, heard how unhappy she was, and saw that she was just skin and bone, and wanted to rescue her. At first the people would not give her up, but after



THE PLAYGROUND AT ST. MARY'S ORPHANAGE

paying quite a sum of money she was allowed to leave. Mr. and Mrs. Quack then returned to Shanghai and brought little Phoenix with them, but later Mr. Quack decided to go abroad to study, and his wife wished to go with him, and what was she to do with the child? Someone told her about this place, so one day she came to see me and brought the little girl with her, and told me her story. So once again Phoenix changed her dwelling place, but this time to stay in a permanent home, well fed, clothed and cared for. She looks fat and well, and has begun to write, read and sew, and we hope she will grow up into a good and useful woman.

Another time a woman brought a girl of fourteen, and said her relatives did not want her, and that she was no use at all. When I looked at her I saw the reason why; she was all crooked; every bone in her body seemed twisted, her head was on one side, her legs different lengths, and her fingers and hands bent. The woman told me that she was only a neighbor, but that she felt sorry for the poor child, and she had asked to have her, and now wanted to give her to the Orphanage. The story she told was, that the child's parents were very poor and had to work hard for their living, and when she was a tiny baby she cried and hindered the mother from her work, so the father took her up and threw her across the room, and this was the cause of her poor little twisted body. Her brain had been injured too, so that it was a wonder to me that she had learned to walk. She was ill when she came, but I hoped that good food and care and hospital treatment might restore her to a certain extent. However, her constitution was so undermined by all she had been

through that she gradually grew worse, and died when she had been here only four months. If she had lived she would always have been a cripple, so that we like to think of her as free from all care and sorrow, in her Heavenly home with the Saviour who loves little children. She was baptized in August, and died in September.

A baby boy who came was left by his mother at St. Elizabeth's Hospital when only a few days old, and the doctor, not knowing how to have him cared for, sent him to me. Of course we can keep him a few years only, so I hope to get him adopted into a good Christian Chinese family, where he will be well looked after and carefully brought up. He is a dear little boy, but not very strong.

There have been six baptisms and six confirmations; two of the girls have been married, and one has gone to St. Mary's Hall to continue her education.

We have to thank the many friends who make it possible to care for these children, and those who have sent gifts for Christmas, and ask that they will continue their prayers and interest, especially for the institution as a whole, that the teachers and helpers may realize their responsibility, and that the girls may grow into good and useful women.

¶ Copies of this pamphlet may be obtained without cost from the Corresponding Secretary, 281 Fourth Avenue, New York, by asking for No. 248.

¶ All offerings for missions should be sent to Mr. George C. Thomas. Treasurer, 281 Fourth Avenue, New York.